WE MADE IT!
With debt, but we made it...

The number of UTEP students taking out loans has increased 25 percent from 2009. With an estimated $1 trillion in student loan debt, young Americans are finding it harder to purchase houses, cars and other big-ticket items. Many are also stalling major life decisions such as getting married or starting a family.

But hey, they have a degree.

Full story on page 6
Student loans might be helpful, but also daunting

BY JOSE SOTO
The Prospector

Allow me to begin by commending the upcoming graduating class for their unyielding efforts in balancing a myriad of homework with their personal lives, executing the commute every day to campus and staying awake for an inhumane amount of hours. Most notably, for not drowning in the horrid whirlpool that is student debt.

Now it’s time to get jobs and pay them off and that in itself is yet another daunting task.

Getting through college is financially exhausting and we as students are offered an array of loan options to help us pay off those finances. Or so we think.

Sure, it is extremely helpful when the responsibility to make sure I fully understand student loans is off my shoulders. However, on my arrival to UTEP, I was in over my head. As a UTEP freshman, I was懵懂 and without the shiny, new car on my driveway. On top of that, when I returned to school I would have to pay for it out of my own pocket.

The daunting task of working to pay off my loan and for my school began to become impossible shortly after I began to take only one or two classes a semester at EPCC, being that I didn’t bother with a job. I couldn’t pay it off in three months, then I would have to submit to a monthly payment of $300, with an interest rate of 12 percent. It was like having my own car payment, without the shiny, new car on my driveway. On top of that, when I returned to school I would have to pay for it out of my own pocket.

If I couldn’t pay it off in three months, then I would have to submit to a monthly payment of $300, with an interest rate of 12 percent. It was like having my own car payment, without the shiny, new car on my driveway. On top of that, when I returned to school I would have to pay for it out of my own pocket.

The daunting task of working to pay off my loan and for my school began to become impossible shortly after I began to take only one or two classes a semester at EPCC, being that I couldn’t afford to pay a full-time semester on my own at UTEP.

The payments for my loan started to reach formidable heights, and inevitably I began to fall behind on them. The loan company began to garnish my wages, meaning they automatically took it out of my check every time I got paid. This consequently set the loan company back and payment took out a huge chunk of what I made as a Starbucks barista.

Eventually, I paid off the full amount of my loan. It took about two and a half years, but finally I was able to enroll for a full semester that was paid with financial assistance. Or so I thought.

Since it had taken me more than the three-month grace period and because the loan company had garnished my wages, I now had to wait a full year for my financial aid to become available again. And so once I more had to pay for school on my own. It wasn’t until two years later that I was able to return to UTEP once I was eligible for financial aid again. It had taken me a total of three years to repay for my mistake regarding student loans. Had I been responsible about what I was accepting by signing on the dotted line and actually understanding the rules and conditions of my student loan, my graduation date would have been much earlier than it currently is.

So, once again, congratulations to our graduating class this semester. Good job on knowing how to handle your financial aid, even those who preposterously erred like I did.

My advice to others who are in their early years of college is to know what they’re doing. Know what you’re accepting and know the rules and conditions.

All loans are different. Read the fine print and ask as many questions necessary in order for you to comprehend it completely. Know the protocol of these loans and their expected interest rates, grace periods and payment options. Not doing so might set you behind and time isn’t something that can be loaned.
Season's greetings from The Prospector Fall 2013 staff

(Top, left to right) Leonardo Montañez, Lorain Watters, Diego Burriaga, Edwin Delgado, Marcela Luna, Fernando Enríquez, Isabel Castillo, Edgar Hernandez, S. David Ramirez, Blake Lanham. (Bottom, left to right) Michaela Romero, Kathy Flores, Jasmine Aguilar, Amanda Quillen, Andrea Acosta, Mariel Rhea, Arau Abinencia, Veronica Gonzalez, Verónica Enríquez, Jaime Garavito. (Not shown) Kristopher Rivera, Aaron Montes, Marcus Sengers, Javier Cerejo, Luis Barrón, Ashley Muñiz, Damaris Balderrama, Steven Mancfield, Jose Soto, Amber Gomez.

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NEW YEAR, NEW YOU! 2014

SENIOR MESSAGES FALL 2013 • CONGRATULATIONS!
Students delay big life decisions as debt increases

BY LORAIN WATTERS AND AMANDA GUILLEN

President Barack Obama signed the Student Loan Interest Rate Deal Aug. 9, which put a cap on loan interest rates at 8.25 percent, but these changes will not take affect until 2014.

“Imagine that you are a student who has to make payment on a student loan. Then imagine the experience needed for graduate school and will begin to help pay for some of the loans. “Yes, I am in debt, but (loans) helped me finish my education. I should be able to pay it all within two years,” Orozco said. “I saw it as an investment in my future.”

Student delay big life decisions as debt increases

Sophomore psychology major Carlos Padilla said he will not be living the same lifestyle as his parents because of his growing debt and his future debt, as he plans to attend medical school.

“I don’t think I could afford any big purchases due to my plan of attending a medical school—which is really expensive, especially since the college I want to attend will be out of state. I predict a lot of debt after graduation,” Padilla said.

UTEP offers a number of resources when paying for school. For example, the EasyPay Plan, which allows a student to pay their tuition through-out the semester, and the Guaranteed Tuition Plan, which guarantees that tuition and fees will remain low as long as the student graduates within four years.

“Students delay big life decisions as debt increases”

I believe that (UTEP) should be able to help us with anything so as to avoid students pulling out so many loans,” Aranas said. “It would be a lot of help, especially to graduate students.”

Roque Orozco, senior music major, knows he is in debt, but continues to use loans to help him pay for school. Contrary to Aranas, he welcomed the changes and is confident about paying them back.

“After (graduating), I’m going to work for a year, save up and pay in a combination of savings and loans,” Orozco said. He plans on working in the public school system and hopes that teaching will provide the experience needed for graduate school and will begin to help pay for some of the loans.

I think it is important to achieve the goals one has for themselves. It is okay to delay some of those grown-up experiences.”

“Students delay big life decisions as debt increases”

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The Prospector
Adderall production and managing abuse becomes a balancing act

BY KRISTOPHER RIVERA
The Prospector

Editor's note: This is part three of a three-part series examining student abuse of prescription drugs Adderall and Ritalin.

The battle to keep Adderall abuse at bay is a tug and pull between meeting consumer demands and regulating the active pharmaceutical ingredient production under the supervision of the Drug Enforcement Administration.

"There are two forces, one of them is the DEA that has put the restrictions on the production of the active ingredient of Adderall (amphetamine salts)," said José Rivera, director of the cooperative pharmacy program at UTEP. "The other force is there is an increase in prescriptions, so when both of them meet, then on occasion you have problems of not finding the medication readily available." "There's a trend of increased use and also misuse of Adderall. People are using them without prescriptions either to get high, or as a college student to be more alert, more awake and to be able to concentrate," Rivera said those things could be attractive and to be able to concentrate. Rivera said those things could be attractive.

"Adderall is a schedule II controlled substance, meaning it has the highest potential for addiction. Adderall is a mix of amphetamine salts. They are stimulants that basically work with the dopamine receptors in the brain and produce a number of different effects, including the person's ability to stay awake longer, to be more alert and produce energy. For those with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Adderall helps with concentration."

The Internet can contribute to the misuse because of its availability and convenience. "There will be websites that are going to promote selling (Adderall) and those are not regulated the way they should be," Rivera said. "There are some websites that work around the law to try to get people to purchase medications through the Internet."

With the Affordable Care Act beginning to take full effect, there may be a rise in prescriptions, since previously uninsured people will now be insured and able to get prescriptions. "People now, who don't have health care insurance, they probably avoid any type of healthcare, unless there is an emergency," Rivera said. "Probably with the increase of people with insurance, there may be more diagnosis of ADHD and people receiving prescriptions for them."

Adderall has a number of problems besides addiction. The drug may affect the cardiovascular system and cause strokes. Adderall may also stimulate the brain to a high level and raise a person's blood pressure, heart rate and body temperature. After prolonged use, the person's tolerance grows, therefore requiring a higher dose. It can lead to seizures, hallucinations and depression because the amphetamines deplete the dopamine after releasing so much of it. People looking to get a bigger high may crush and snort or inject the amphetamines.

"That's the most dangerous because there are other substances there," Rivera said. "You're increasing the effect because it's going directly to the blood, but there are other stuff in the tablet or capsule that is not for the purpose of injection. So you can be causing additional problems."
Health

Affordable care: The good, the bad and the ugly

BY S. DAVID RAMIREZ

This article is part of a continuing series on the Affordable Care Act.

2013 has been a perilous year for the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

The ACA has faced Supreme Court challenges, numerous Senate votes and a disjointed roll-out. With more legislation and additional discussion to take place when Congress reconvenes after the holiday break, now is an opportune moment to catch-up with the turmoil and progress of the healthcare law.

The Good

The Healthcare.gov exchange site saw numerous improvements over the Thanksgiving Holiday. “As we’ve said, with any web project there is no magic moment but a process of continual improvement over time and we will continue to work to make enhancements in the days, weeks and months ahead,” said Julie Bataille, director of communications for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services in a statement.

Bataille said, via her blog, that more than 2.6 million people have visited the Healthcare.gov site were only those living below the poverty line could have access to $1,061 per beneficiary.

Senior students are a core part of supporting the system that will no longer allow insurance companies to decline coverage for individuals with pre-existing conditions.

A series of advertising campaigns have begun to circulate. The target audience is obvious with taglines mentioning that most people under 50 years of age can purchase a plan for less than $50 a month. A new radio spot featuring Pete Wentz, of pop-punk band Fall Out Boy, pushes listeners to visit the Healthcare.gov site.

Research into the claim of a $50 premium has shown that in order to receive rebates and discounts, individuals under 30 must make at least $20,000 a year. The average work-study allocation, as reported by UTEP, Sam Houston State University and Texas A&M, lingers in the $2,000 to $6,000 mark depending on place-work and past job experience.

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50 SHADES OF ORANGE

More than 400G costumes and curious citizens gathered at Tricky Falls on June 5 for a night featuring glass eating, burlesque, bondage and industrial music. The DVB Fetish Ball brought local and regional talent to downtown El Paso for an unconventional convention.

“We don’t have the big community here,” said Erika, a graduate student and member of the Lotus Blossoms burlesque troupe. “It is a target in the city to come out and say ‘this is what I like to do,’ but everybody needs an outlet. We’re trying to show people that there are different things out there in El Paso.”

OUT OF THE SMOKE

Demolition raises dust and environmental concerns

Concerns about the environment were raised as this week’s demolitions, but environmental experts say that there is nothing to worry about.

Both ASARCO smelteacks and City Hall released clouds of dust and debris. The use of those who receive assistance, through the GI Bill might see a delay in funding should the shutdown extend past October.

This adds urgency to our efforts to resolve this,” O’Rourke said. He also said he is certain Congress can reach a compromise before Oct. 17.

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PASS THE BUDGET

Shut down may defund GI bill

Rep. Beto O’Rourke, D-Texas, said students should not be impacted by the partial government shut-down as long as it remains before Oct. 17, which marks Congress’ deadline to raise the debt ceiling that could prevent a default.

In an Oct. 5 interview, O’Rourke said those who receive assistance, through the GI Bill might see a delay in funding should the shutdown extend past October.

“This adds urgency to our efforts to resolve this,” O’Rourke said. He also said he is certain Congress can reach a compromise before Oct. 17.

A steak dinner and a carton of Lucky Strikes cigarettes were a treat on June 5, 1944, a day before the D-Day invasion of Normandy, France. Other than the special meal and cigarettes, it seemed like a regular practice jump for the men, who were part of the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 82nd Airborne Divi-sion during World War II.

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SPECIAL TO THE PROSPECTOR

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S. David Ramirez may be reached at theprospector@elpaso.org.

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WASHINGTON – After graduating from high school, Crystal Brockington plans to pursue a degree in biology or chemistry. She knows that, as a black woman, she’s part of the minority of students pursuing degrees in science, technology, engineering and technology, or STEM fields. But she’s not daunted by the numbers, she said, instead she’s encouraged by the support she’s received.

Of the 62,211 degrees awarded in the sciences and engineering in 2010, 3,692 were awarded to black women, Hispanics and American Indians who earn degrees in engineering and the physical and life sciences. The participation in mathematics has not daunted by the numbers, she said, and all, but still. “It prepares them for life after UTEP,” Kirkén said. “They’re more confident because they’ll have good mentors, they’ll have worked on or cutting-edge equipment and technology.”

Kirkén said that, although there’s no strategy to get students excited about STEM, creating better teachers, funded research opportunities and community outreach are helping get Hispanics in the classroom.

“I think for the U.S. economy to move forward, it’s going to be built on the STEM disciplines,” Kirkén said. “And if we don’t have underrepresented minorities in those plans, we’re destined to fail.”

I think for the U.S. economy to move forward, it’s going to be built on the STEM disciplines...if we don’t have underrepresented minorities in those plans, we’re destined to fail...

— Robert Kirken, dean of the College of Science at UTEP

The push to get minorities into STEM fields

The push to get minorities into STEM fields

Misuse of financial aid may cause burden for students

By LEONARDO MONTAÑEZ

The Prospector

As the end of the semester arrives and the spring semester is upon us, it is time for students to renew their financial aid and it is time when students may misuse that money again.

According to the blog Generation Opportunity, students on average owe $27,000 in student loans. Noel Cardenas, sophomore music major, has taken out around $7,000 in loans, but said he has used some of it for purposes outside of school. “It is easy to use the money that they give you since we think of it as free money,” Cardenas said. “I used it to buy things for myself and pay other things—I do use it for books and all, but still.”

According to Generation Opportunity, student loan debt is more than $1 trillion nationwide and there are approximately $7 million in American with student loan debts—almost 12 percent of the population of the United States. “I just hope that I don’t end up owing like a hundred grand. I plan to paying them as soon as possible,” Cardenas said. “It is a constant pressure, really it looms in your conscious whenever you think of money.”

Loan debt has grown around a 511 percent since 1999, according to Generation Opportunity. Student loan debt and college tuition has grown more than 439 percent—meaning it is almost five times more expensive now in 2013. “I don’t particularly like using or borrowing loans, but that is the only way I can pay for college,” Cardenas said. “I deny that I enjoy using them, but at the same time I wish I didn’t have to give that money back.”

Layla Stull was formerly a studio art major, but dropped out of school in 2011. She needed to leave college because she had accumulated a debt of $25,000 within her first three years of school. “I actually don’t quite remember how I used all of that money,” Stull said. “What I do know is that I didn’t understand how to use loans, apparently, because when after a long period of time I checked, my debt was there.” But she said that is now working to pay her debt off and will come back to college once she has enough money.

“I can only tell students to be careful, it is very easy to mess up and end up owing the government a lot,” Stull said. “Learn how to use government money, use it wisely because it is not as they say, it is not free money.”

Teach me!

- Unsupervised Support
- Hands-on Training
- Individual Assistance
Top photos of 2013

1. The ASARCO demolition
2. Minerpalooza 2013
3. Convoy of Hope
4. World War II veteran Robert Chisolm
5. City Hall Demolition
6. Centennial Countdown Celebration
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QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Overall, how was your semester?

MARIO GUERRA
Freshman electrical engineering major
"My semester was good. I got to learn how to manage my time and new study habits that helped me retain more."

CODY VILLALOBOS
Sophomore mechanical engineering major
"It was a tough semester because of the higher engineering classes, but I was able to make it through."

ELIZABETH RAMIREZ
Freshman psychology major
"I expected this semester to be stressful but it actually went better than expected."

JOHN VILLALOBOS
Sophomore education major
"My intensive reading classes made this semester rough, but it was not too bad."

HALEY O'BRIEN
Senior sociology major
"This semester was long and really dragged, so I am glad it’s finally coming to an end."

LUIS MARQUEZ
Junior music major
"My GPA did not go down so I would say it was a good semester."

JUAN TORRES
Sophomore criminal justice major
"It was a good semester and I learned that in fraternity, brotherhood is a lot more than people expect."

MARIO FERNANDEZ
Freshman electrical computer engineering major
"Although it was challenging at times, this semester has been fun and I have made a lot of new friends."

MAYRA BARREDA
Senior psychology major
"I had to drop a class this semester because it was getting hard to manage five. Overall I did well though."

ERNESTO ORTIZ
Senior criminology major
"I learned that I have to get to school around 7 a.m. because these darn freshmen must sleep in the parking lot."

MIRIAM VEGA
Junior drawing major
"I had a good semester, but I found you should register early so you don’t have a problem."

JOSH MEDINA
Freshman biological sciences major
"I enjoyed having afternoon classes and waking up at 3 p.m., being here for an hour and then going home."

TIAHNA ONTIVEROS
Sophomore psychology major
"This was an interesting semester because my classes were for my major, so it was a different kind of workload."

SCOTT DAVIS
Freshman mechanical engineering major
"I learned how the university works, what to do and how to prepare for college."

VELIA QUIROZ
Senior multimedia journalism major
"It was a long semester and in my classes I got to learn a lot of different things. In Blon- desian I got to learn about the interview process and meeting people."
Commencement ceremony to be streamed live on KFOX-TV

BY LORAIN WATER

The Prospector

The live stream of commencement will continue for its third semester, allowing families and friends who are unable to attend to see their students walk across the stage to receive their diploma. University Communications and University Relations who partnered with KFOX-TV in 2012 after KFOX approached them with the idea of streaming the commencement ceremony on their network for free. “The audience numbers after each one have shown a high interest and we have viewers all over the world,” said Frank Montes de Oca, assistant director of University Relations.

In a statement released by University Communications, during the December 2012 commencement there were about 793 views. During the May 2013 commencement, there were about 2,912 views. Of those views, families were tuning in from Mexico, the Czech Republic, Latvia, Germany, India, Libya, Ireland, Japan, Samoa, Australia, Spain and Bahrain, to name a few. “We have met with them (KFOX) prior and after the commencements to discuss each one,” Montes de Oca said. “Since we use their system, they have the commencement running and don’t show the evening news so it’s a really nice thing that they’re doing.”

University Communications will also upload the commencement videos after the ceremonies in case anyone was unable to watch it live or if they wish to download the video.

For more information about commencement, visit ia.utep.edu.

Lorain Waters may be reached at lorainwaters@email.com.

CEREMONIES

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
(Graduate Students Only)
Friday, Dec. 13, 2013
6:30 p.m.
Magoffin Auditorium
No RSVP required
For more information, Nori Silva at 747-5783

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
Hooding and Certificate Ceremony
Friday, Dec. 13, 2013
Time TBA
Plaza Theater, Downtown El Paso
For more information, Elsa Quezada at 747-7726

COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES
College and Graduate Hooding Ceremony
Saturday, Dec. 14, 2013
3-4:30 p.m.
Magoffin Auditorium
For more information: 747-7245

Department of Kinesiology Graduation Reception
Friday, Dec. 13, 2013
Time: TBA
Location: TBD
For more information, Sylvia Rodriguez 747-7245

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
Awards & Hooding Ceremony
Honoring Department/Program Award Recipients; Senior Honor Cord Recipients; Master’s and Doctoral Candidates
Thursday, Dec. 12, 2013
7 p.m. (Students must arrive by 6:30 p.m.)
Magoffin Auditorium
For more information: Cc deSantiago at 747-8621 or cdesantiago1@utep.edu

College - Commencement Ceremony
Friday, Dec. 13, 2013
3 p.m.
Union Cinema, Union Building East
RSVP with Araceli Sanchez by Dec. 6: asanchez21@utep.edu

10% off students and UTEP faculty w/ UTEP ID

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Congratulations Class of 2013!
GECU FOUNDATION PRESENTS $75K FOR SCHOLARSHIP FUND IN COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

The GECU Foundation presented $75,000 to the UTEP Office of Institutional Advancement for the R.C. Morgan Scholarship Fund. The gift will be used for student scholarships in UTEP’s College of Business Administration.

Through the R.C. Scholarship Fund, GECU awards deserving students with financial assistance to pursue a higher education at UTEP. The R.C. Morgan Scholarship Fund was established in 1988 and is named in honor of former GECU President and CEO R.C. Morgan, an avid supporter of education and the credit union movement.

FACULTY MEMBER TO HOST RECITAL

UTEF piano faculty member Oscar Macchioni, to present a solo recital featuring J.S. Bach-Marcello’s Adagio BWV 974, Robert Schumann’s Carnival from Vienna op. 26, Carlos Gustavino’s cyclical Sonata in C-sharp minor and a set of colorful preludes from Book I by Claude Debussy.

FIVE STUDENTS RECEIVE GILMAN SCHOLARSHIP FOR STUDY ABROAD

Four students received Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarships to help them study abroad in the spring semester of 2014. One alternate candidate was also selected. The total amount of these awards is $17,000.

The four scholars are Maria Ruiz-Pineda, Lynette Escobar, Carlos Nevarez and Ricardo Myers, and the alternate is Carina Samano. Ruiz-Pineda, Escobar and Samano will study in South Korea. Nevarez will study in Spain and Myers will study in Australia.

CORNEL WEST TO SPEAK FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Cornel West, activist, professor and author of 20 books on race and political issues, will deliver a guest lecture at 7 p.m. Feb. 7 at the Magoffin Auditorium in honor of Black History Month.

Tickets are now on sale for $40 and may be purchased at the Ticket Center.

STUDENTS WIN FIRST PRIZE FOR BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Two UTEP students have won first prizes for their presentations at the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS). It’s the largest professional conference for minority students to pursue advanced training in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

Tim Brown, a senior chemistry major, won first prize for his oral presentation titled Insect Cell Expression and Purification of PTEN — A Tumor Suppressing Lipid Phosphatase. Jorge Martínez, also a senior chemistry major, won first place for his poster presentation titled Metal-Catalyzed Reduction of Amides, Key Intermediates Observed and Isolated.

During the four-day conference, more than 1,500 students participate in poster and oral presentations in 12 disciplines in the biomedical and behavioral sciences, including mathematics.

2013 WINTER COMMENCEMENT

Commencement Ceremony Times:
9 a.m.
Morning Commencement
• College of Liberal Arts
2 p.m.
Afternoon Commencement
• College of Business Administration
• College of Education
• School of Nursing

Saturday, December 14 2013
Don Haskins Center - The University of Texas at El Paso

The Day of Commencement

1. In order to experience an enjoyable Commencement ceremony, please arrive at Memorial Gym at least an hour prior to the ceremony. Check-in will begin inside of Auxiliary Gym (room 120) at the following times:
   • For 9 a.m. Ceremony: 8 a.m. (doors open at 7:30 a.m.)
   • For 2 p.m. Ceremony: 1 p.m. (doors open at 12:30 p.m.)
   • For 7 p.m. Ceremony: 6 p.m. (doors open at 5:30 p.m.)
   *Please ensure that you have checked-in and picked up your reader card during these times.

2. Arrive early and have a photo taken in Memorial Gym prior to the ceremony.

3. Please leave all personal items (backpacks, cell phones, purses, coats, etc.) at home/automobile. These items (beach balls, balloons, confetti, noise makers, silly string, etc.) will not be allowed in the Don Haskins Center.

4. Though your family and friends are an important part of commencement, childcare services will not be provided, and children may not accompany graduates during the commencement ceremony. Please make appropriate plans for the care of your children.

5. Wear regalia and comfortable shoes, and out of courtesy for your fellow graduates, please remain for the duration of the ceremony.

For parking recommendations, tips for families and friends and other information: utep.edu/commencement

Congratulations to all the graduates!

Medallion Pack available at University Bookstore
(Includes cap, gown, tassel, alumni membership, t-shirt, and mug), 

Office of University Relations
“A Christmas Carol” embraces its supernatural elements this year

BY JOSE SOTO

The UTEP Department of Theatre and Dance brings their annual production of ‘A Christmas Carol’ to the stage. Faculty and students have rehearsed countless of hours to ensure it will be an unforgettable performance. The opening night will be on Dec. 15. This year’s presentation of the stage adaptation of the inspiring 19th-century story marks its eighth year of production. Based on Charles Dickens’ classic novel, “A Christmas Carol” is a timeless tale that revives around the angry and bitter Scrooge, who has a change of heart after receiving some ghostly visits from Jacob Marley, the Ghosts of Christmas past, the present and the future yet to come.

The story is a Christmas staple and conveys the message that everyone can feel the spirit of the holidays, even those with the coldest of hearts.

Austin Savage, a UTEP alum and founder of Border Theatre, has been the director for ‘A Christmas Carol’ for the past three productions. He said that this year’s production differs from the previous years of performance, as they are attempting to show some interesting aspects regarding the presentation of the supernatural elements within the show.

“The ghosts and even Jacob Marley are all part of a very unique spectacle that should impress the adults while captivating the children,” Savage said. “UTEP’s ‘A Christmas Carol’ is an annual production, so over the years it has been refined and improved upon by a variety of directors which leads to a very impressive show!”

Adriana Dominguez, director of audience development, said the production has become a UTEP tradition.

“We find it is a great way to reach out to the community and participate in the holiday spirit,” Dominguez said. “As it is a well-established and very large show, it provides our students a wonderful opportunity to be onstage and do design work.”

Regarding the audience this year, Dominguez said that the department is very lucky that the attendance has been maintained throughout the many years of their presentation of ‘A Christmas Carol’.

“We have found that several families now make ‘A Christmas Carol’ a part of their holiday tradition—they join us every year to kick off Christ- mas,” Dominguez said. “Along with the public performances, we have five school performances, where more than 1,500 local school children come to the theater during the week for the show as a part of a field trip. It is an amazing experience for all involved to see the awe and wonder in a child’s eye when experiencing live theatre through this magical tale.”

Being cast in ‘A Christmas Carol’ for the third year in a row, Richard Nielsen, senior theatre arts major takes center stage as he plays the lead role of Scrooge this year. He previ- ously portrayed Fezziwig his first year and the Ghost of Christmas present in his second year.

“I am the face of the show on my third consecutive year participating in this beloved play,” Nielsen said. “With Scrooge, I’ve been studying a lot of different things to help find my place in the character. My personal favorite is to people watch, espe- cially people with different physical- ity and try to incorporate it into my performance. Another strategy that Nielsen uses is to better understand his character was to watch other versions of Scrooge. However, he realized this wouldn’t work and strived to work on finding his own self in the character.

“That way, the audience sees on stage isn’t just a character, it’s me,” Nielsen said.

Allowing for the production to be open for student input, Savage said that this annual production provides an opportunity for student designers and actors to work on their craft and he couldn’t be happier with this year’s group of hard workers.

“The imagination and creativity of the designers has been stunning to me. (Theatre art students) Luis Tor- res (costume designer), Gil Arias (sound), Trent Ware (lights), Diana Davila and Marissa Diaz (projec- tions) have just blown me away in these early stages,” Savage said. “As for the actors, some of the more ex- perienced students are challenging themselves by expanding their act- ing range. The younger students are showing tremendous enthusiasm and confidence.”

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Best moments of fall 2013


Attention Creative Writing Students
The UT Board of Regents wants to recognize you!

Eligibility:
Full-time undergraduate students of any major studying at a UT institution

General Criteria:
Evidence of academic excellence.
Must demonstrate commitment to the arts through participation in University and community activities.
Creativity, originality, imagery, artistic quality, and mastery of expression are apparent in the work submitted.

Guidelines:
- Submit up to five poems (no more than 10 pages total).
- Short fiction submissions must be between 7 and 20 pages.
- All submissions must use a 12-point font and be written in English.
- Each writing sample must include a title and page numbers.
- Do not include applicant name or identify information in the writing samples.

Categories:
Poetry Writing & Short Fiction

This information should only appear on the application form that accompanies the work.
- Only original, unpublished work can be submitted. Writers may submit work in both categories, but applicant can win only one category.
- If submitting work in both categories, a separate application form is required for each submission.

Nomination Materials:
- An application form indicating the creative writing category (poetry writing or short essay).
- An unofficial college transcript as evidence of excellence in academic performance and good academic standing, signed by the department chair or college dean in your major of study.
- Release form to allow UT System to publicly share the student’s work.
- Creative writing sample. All work must be embedded in a single file (pdf).

For questions or to submit your materials, contact:
Laura Ortega at (915) 747-5648 or lmortega@utep.edu

A $1,500 monetary award in the winner’s name to the department listed on the application. The designated program or department which receives the monetary prize may award the money to the student winner of other student projects, or used the proceeds at the department’s discretion.
Must-have wardrobe items for the winter season

By Jose Soto and Ashley Munoz
The Prospector

As UTEP students begin to put away their summer attire and start swapping it for their winter one, it is important to have the essentials to fashionably survive the winter season.

Winter is swamped with festivities, must-appearances at dinners and gatherings and the annual Christmas and New Year’s Eve parties. Here are some tips to help you stay warm yet fashionable:

1. Beanies—not just one, but a plethora! Beanies—especially knitted ones—are always a great way to keep your head warm while looking sassy. Different patterns and colors allow them to be versatile, allowing you to apply them from the most casual outfits to the ones for a night out on the town. Droopy beanies—the ones that hang a bit from the top—are particularly in style this winter, and perhaps it’ll look better than your traditional graduation cap.

2. Leather boots—although they may be expensive—are a necessary investment for your winter attire. Leather boots provide great coverage from the cold for your feet and help you get around when the ground is muddy and slippery. Leather boots also look great with any pair of jeans, which will also help you stay away from your summer sneakers into the new season. Pea coat and leather boots are a perfect solution to not saying goodbye to your dresses during the cold winter season. Keep your legs warm by wearing various shades of grey and black tights are also the hottest winter alternative to underwear is perfect for keeping toasty without much effort. Time has done well and now there are thinner, sleeker long johns that won’t add bulk to your outfit. Slip these on for some extra warmth this winter. Women, wearing some knitted tights is the perfect solution to not saying goodbye to your dresses this winter. Keep your legs warm by wearing various shades of colors and patterns, pairing them with neutral dresses, long sweaters and cardigans, have fun with it and experiment. Grey and black tights are always handy, so be sure to get a few.

As the graduating class walks on stage for their well-earned diploma and the rest of us march to the Don Haskins Center and parties for the celebrations, it is important to keep warm, but that does not mean you should neglect your look either. There will be many invites during this coldest of seasons for you to partake in, and having these five items will help you look hot during these freezing months.

3. Pea coat, and be sure it’s a nice one too! Go for a sturdy, thick and warm one. A three-button style looks best on most guys, but keep in mind the positions of pockets so it doesn’t flare too much when you put your hands inside to keep warm. Also, make sure the color choice is adequate for all attire. Black is always safe, but some grays and tans will work as well. Choose wisely and make it versatile for when you’re summoned for a business meeting and for when you’re attending graduation parties.

4. Scarves and gloves, and again, a plethora of them. Having different pairs of gloves and scarfs is important to your look and your health. Many people get sick during the winter, but keeping your hands and mouth covered can help prevent this. Slip them on and buff them up and in no time, you’ll jazz up your outfit just enough to be fashionably notable on these frigid days. These are also the hottest accessories, for women to add to their dress with tights, a blazer or simply a long-sleeved blouse with jeans and boots. From animal prints to two-toned, or even a monotone scarf, can really make a statement.

5. Thermals and long johns, and I’m not talking about the ones your mom used to make you wear back in the day. You’re either a college man or a graduate about to enter the workforce now. This winter alternative to underwear is perfect for keeping toasty without much effort. Time has done well and now there are thinner, sleeker long johns that won’t add bulk to your outfit. Slip these on for some extra warmth this winter. Women, wearing some knitted tights is the perfect solution to not saying goodbye to your dresses during the cold winter season. Keep your legs warm by wearing various shades of colors and patterns, pairing them with neutral dresses, long sweaters and cardigans, have fun with it and experiment. Grey and black tights are always handy, so be sure to get a few.

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QUESTION OF THE WEEK

What would you like to receive as a graduation present?

AIMME LOPEZ
Freshman multimedia journalism major
“My ideal gift would be to have the latest iPad so I can use it for both work and play.”

ANAIS PARRA
Freshman nursing major
“I would not mind getting a 2014 Ford Focus with a black leather interior.”

CANDACE ALVARADO
Junior kinesiology major
“For graduation I would want an Audi.”

CHRIS FLORES
Graduate homeland security major
“For graduation I want a trip to the beach.”

ALBERTO AVENDANO
Freshman biological science major
“For a graduation gift I would want an all expenses paid trip to Barcelona because it’s the most attractive city and I like the soccer team.”

HECTOR DOMINGUEZ
Senior mechanical engineering major
“It would be cool to get a Dodge Dart as a graduation present.”

ROBERTO CARBAJAL
Senior finance major
“If I could have any graduation present I would get an Aston Martin 177.”

TIMOTHY STEFFLER
Sophomore sociology major
“I would want a ‘69 Mustang Boss 429.”

VALERIA MADRID
Junior chemistry major
“I would love to graduate knowing I have been accepted to a graduate school. That would be the best gift.”

VIRIDIANA FELIX
Junior mathematics major
“I would want to take a trip to Spain with my family after graduation.”

GRADUATION PREP

‘A gift is a gift no matter how small’

BY OSCAR GARZA
The Prospector

Every semester, thousands of graduating seniors embark on a new and exciting journey—graduation, a career and life after college. Here are some interesting gifts that upcoming graduates may like to receive for their special day.

Because graduation is not only about their accomplishments in college, but also the aftermath, why not give that special grad an elegant suit and any other graduates’ favorite stores and unexpected journeys the graduate may want to take after graduating. There are many more gifts that may be useful for upcoming graduates like apartment appliances for those moving out of their family home, office supplies and décor. Anything from a desk to professional chairs can make graduates feel that something new and exciting is happening.

Another good gift would be a diploma frame—what better way to represent the graduate’s accomplishment than by displaying it in their office? This will certainly make the graduates confident on their first day at work and proud of the journey they’ve taken to get to where they are. Whatever the case may be, graduation is a chance for celebration, the opportunity to recognize the graduate’s merits of finishing their college education and prepare them for the future that lies ahead.

“One final note may be reached at TheProspectorDaily@live.com.”

MICHELE ROMAN / THE PROSPECTOR
Take a break—see a movie

Apart from eating your favorite holiday food, spending time with your family and getting some much-desired down time like going to the movies will probably become part of the seasonal routine.

The question arises as to what will be the most popular and awaited films for December? Here are some films to watch for this winter.

"Out of the Furnace"—Dec. 6
This movie is produced by Ridley Scott, the same person who brought us "Black Hawk Down" (2001) and "The Gladiator" (2000). It stars Christian Bale and Casey Affleck as two brothers who have always wanted to escape their life of struggle and make their way to a better place. One brother (Bale) goes to prison and the other (Affleck) gets caught up in a violent criminal life. The film ends up with Bale getting out of prison and trying to help his brother escape from a dangerous life.

"Last Days on Mars"—Dec. 6
This movie follows the story of a group of astronauts living on Mars, who are about to leave and go home when one of them finds evidence that may point to life on Mars.

"The Hobbit: The Desolation of the Smaug"—Dec. 13
The second of two movies that follow the story of Bilbo Baggins and his journey. These movies are based on the book "The Hobbit," a prequel to "The Lord of the Rings" by J.R.R. Tolkien. Everyone will be looking forward to this because of its popularity, but be sure to drink a caffeine-stewed beverage since the movie will be 182 minutes long.

"A Christmas Carol"—Dec. 15
This season especially, we are really flushing out the pain and suffering Scrooge goes through so that his redemption to the audience seems that much more deserved.

The show will debut at the Wise Family Theatre, located on the second floor of the Fox Fine Arts Center on Dec. 15 with shows at 2:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. and on Dec. 19-20 at 7 p.m.

"A Christmas Carol" can be found at the Prospector. Special to the Prospector

By Marcus Seegers

Emergency Medicine Scribe Systems

Now Hiring Medical Scribes!

You’ll be responsible for charting during patient exams.
Work in the ED-gain experience for medical, nursing or PA school
Work with physicians at Sierra Providence Health Network (SPHN)

Must have 15-20 hours availability per week.

Apply online at scribework.com
Centennial tassle not worth the hassle

By Amber Gomez
The Prospector

With it being only 29 days away from UTEP beginning its 100-year celebration, the university is getting ready to send out yet another graduating class in less than 10 days. As they walk down the stage on Dec. 14 to receive their diploma, however, they may feel they will be missing out on next year’s celebrations filled with centennial lectures, projects and the exciting UTEP campus transformation.

“I feel that graduating before the centennial happens is an unfortunate thing,” said sophomore business major Oscar Casanova. “The university only gets to turn 100 years old one time, and therefore it is a once-in-a-lifetime experience for students to be part of this celebration.”

A misconception some students may have is that graduating during the centennial will be different from other commencement ceremonies prior to theirs, but according to Gary Edens Vice President of Student Affairs, the centennial graduations will be unique, but nothing out of the ordinary.

“Our priority is to make every graduation special–in that it is the centennial–students should not wait to graduate until a particular time or not,” Montes said. “Some of the things are still in the planning stage. We are trying to make it interesting, possibly even base it on a budget, but nothing too major.”

While graduating during the 100th anniversary will be special—in that it is the centennial–students should graduate as soon as possible, Edens said.

“Graduation is a great thing, centennial or not,” Edens said. “If they graduate in December, it means that they’re out in the job force and they can get their lives started. I think students should graduate as fast as they can. Why would they wait? I tell every student that walks in, ‘we want you to graduate, don’t postpone it.’ Graduating from UTEP is the best thing that anyone can do.”

Casanova believes that being part of the centennial will help students create unity with the university, therefore bringing a sense of Miner pride. “I guess I would like to graduate in spring 2014 to get started with my professional career,” Casanova said. “But on the bright side, I love that I’ll still be present while the university turns 100 years old.”

Despite there being nothing significant about graduating in spring or fall 2014, as if, now students stay at the university for graduate school, they will still be able to participate in the future festivities being planned by the many committees of the university along with witnessing and being part of the completion of construction.

“Working hard for it, so it will be a delight to graduate centennial or not,” said senior chemistry major Guillermo Jimenez. “I see it as a door for me to say goodbye to my past and hello to my future. I want to walk and be honored all those who supported me to finish my education, whether it’s at a specific time or not.”

Layla Stull, dropout art student, continued her life as an artist even after dropping out of school because she thinks, that is the beauty of arts.

“I dropped to start making money to pay my loans, but I kept my career close to me and applied as much as I could from what I learned at college,” Stull said. “And that’s the beauty of arts because you can practice them even if you are not at school, unlike many other majors, and that you can learn from teachers, but one’s voice come from ourselves and it is on us to be good artists.”

According to Stull, she has sold many of portraits even though she hasn’t graduated and it helped her pay some of her bills.

“Even though I didn’t finish college, people are willing to buy art they consider good and as long as you have your style, people are going to like it,” Portillo said. “And if money worries you, still study art because if that is your real passion you’ll get the money because you are doing a good job.”

This movie is directed by Ben Stiller, who has acted in everything from “Night at the Museum” (2006) to “The Watch” (2012). The plot involves Walter Mitty (Stiller), a timid magazine photo manager who is about to embark on a global journey, where he dares to have a more adventurous life. It is a comedy starring Ben Stiller, Steve Carell, Paul Rudd and Kristen Wiig. The plot follows four friends returning to the news industry as they join Channel 24 News. They had previously gained their success in the “7th” at Channel 4 News and now they have come out of retirement and expect the news industry to have remained the same.

“The Secret Life of Walter Mitty” is based on James Thurber’s short story, which was first published in The New Yorker on March 1939.

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Thank you to all my family, friends, and teachers who supported and encouraged me. I am truly blessed.

Thank you to all my teachers who guided me through my academic journey.

Thank you to all my friends who shared my laughter and tears.

Thank you to all my family who believed in me.

Thank you to all my friends who believed in me.

Thank you for all your love and support.

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Thank you for all your love and support.
I wonder if it was a difficult experience for you to finally decide to start this journey? I hope it was as enjoyable as I think it was. Good Luck on your CS! UTP was the best.

Thank you, Adobe.

Gracias a todos mi familia y amigos por apoyar a lo largo de mi carrera. Ocupando el lugar que me merezca en la universidad. 

La familia que me merezca en la escuela. 

Thank you, UTP for the memories, friends, and my education.

To my loved ones, thank you for your support.

Thank you, UTP!!!

Peace out, UTP!!!

Adios amigos.
Aiming for 7-0 start against Aggies

"We need a team effort to beat them at their place. They have a good crowd."

-Chrisahuna Parker, junior guard

"Our intensity needs to be there and we need to make it a team effort. We need everybody into it," Parker said. "We need a team effort to beat them at their place. They have a good crowd. We need to get a good start and keep the key players throughout the whole season, that would have been a stretch."

What this season has shown is stark realism. UTEP does not have a good team and it might be that way for a while. There is a good, a bad and definitely an ugly to the UTEP football team.

The Bad.

As the UTEP football team season and end with another loss on Nov. 30 at Murfreesboro, Tenn. against Middle Tennessee State, it would be an understatement to say that this season has been more than disappointing.

Optimism probably gets the best of us, but if you were to have said in August that UTEP would end the season with a 2-10 record, having one of the worst defenses in the nation and have a multitude of injured key players throughout the whole season, that would have been a stretch.

Creating a new level of expectations

I think we just got to stay focused and do the little things. If we keep doing those things, we'll be successful later on in the season.

-Kayla Thornton, senior forward

The Miners have began their 2013-14 season with six straight victories and have won those games with a 29-point margin average.

Gati said the key is that they want to win as much as they can. "So every time we’re on the court, we want to score, get the rebounds, run, run just keep going," she said.

The Miners might have made their early opponents look elementary, but the schedule only gets harder as the season goes on. After the Dec. 3 game against New Mexico State in Las Cruces, the Miners will play in the Puerto Rico Classic, where they will be

- Aaron Montez / The Prospector
**THE MOST IMPORTANT MOMENTS OF 2013**

**1. Football**
**UTEP AGAINST NEW MEXICO AND NEW MEXICO STATE**

Sept. 7 marked the first game of the Miners under new head coach Sean Kugler. The game turned into an exciting shootout as late as the 45-45 tie a crowd at the Sun Bowl, but the Lobos running back Kassey Carrier ran for 291 yards against a young and inexperienced Miner defense to achieve a 42-35 overtime win for New Mexico. The bright light for the Miners was the offense and the performance of freshman running back Aaron Jones, who ran 127 yards and two touchdowns. One week later, the Miners traveled to Las Cruces to defeat the New Mexico State Aggies 42-21, where freshman back Darrin Laufasa sealed the win with two touchdowns in the fourth quarter, which made it five straight wins for UTEP over NMSU.

**2. Track and Field**
**ANTHONY ROTICH WINS NATIONAL TITLE**

On June 8 in Eugene, Ore., Rotich claimed gold in the 3,000-meter steeplechase at the 2013 NCAA Outdoor Track and Field Championship.

**3. Track and Field**
**MINERS CONQUER CONFERENCE CROWN**

Led by sophomore distance runner Anthony Rotich, who took gold in the 1,500 and 5,000 meters in addition to the 3,000 meter steeplechase, the Miners conquered their first men’s track and field outdoor conference championship since 2008.

**4. Women’s Basketball**
**BIGGEST WINS IN SCHOOL HISTORY**

In one week, the Miners’ women’s basketball team was able to get to two of their biggest wins in school history. On Nov. 16, the Miners faced Big 12 opponent Kansas State. UTEP began on a 13-0 run and never looked back as they cruised past the Wildcats, 84-39, just one point shy of the 46-point win margin of UTEP over UT Pan America in 2006. However, on Nov. 22, the Miners were able to break the record and routed Northern Arizona, 92-43, making it the largest margin of victory against a Div. 1 school, while sweeping a win over Kansas State is now the third-largest margin now.

**5. Men’s Basketball**
**BATTLE 4 ATLANTIS**

Despite a 36-point loss to No. 23 Iowa in the semifinals on Nov. 29, the Miners proved to be a competitive team in the Battle 4 Atlantis. UTEP, in the first round, defeated the Tennessee Volunteers, 78-70—a team that was considered a top 25 team in the pre-season. Two nights later in the third-place game, UTEP faced national powerhouse No. 2 Kansas. Despite losing, the Miners were close to pulling off a major upset, but lost 67-63 and finished the tournament with a 1-2 record against three of the best teams in the country.

**6. Women’s Soccer**
**UTEP UPSETS COLORADO COLLEGE**

Colorado College came to El Paso with an 11-game undefeated streak, had already secured the Conference USA regular season title and was considered as the 27th-best team in the nation. The Miners hosted the Tigers on Oct. 27 after a 2-0 win over Texas San Antonio two days before. They were trying to close their home schedule with a win and to clinch a spot in the Conference USA Championship.

After going down in the 17th minute with a penalty kick, the Miners, with another penalty, were able to pull even in the 37th minute. The Tigers tried to hold the 1-1 draw, but in the 64th minute sophomore midfielder Lauren Katada served a ball to the heart of the penalty box, where sophomore forward Angela Cutaza headed the ball into the net to give the Miners the 2-1 victory.

**7. Football**
**JAMEIL SHOWERS**

On Feb. 26, Texas A&M’s backup quarterback announced that he was transferring to UTEP. Showers, who had been a backup to Ryan Tannehill and Johnny Manziel, was the first big addition for the Miners under Kugler. Showers was first introduced to the local media on July 12. During the fall, Showers completed 107 passes of 188 attempts for 1,263 yards and 11 touchdowns, in addition to 195 yards rushing and four touchdowns on the ground before a separated shoulder injury against Rice on Oct. 26 ended his season.

**8. Men’s Basketball**
**MEMPHIS VS. UTEP**

Senior night for the Miners began with an unexpected twist. On March 5, the LA Times reported that USC Athletic Director Pat Haden had approached Tim Floyd to ask him to take the job as the Trojans’ head coach, the rumor spread quickly in El Paso and created a lot of uncertainty. The Miners, however, were ready to host No. 25 Memphis in the third round, defeated the Tennessee Volunteers 78-70—a team that was considered a top 25 team in the tournament. Despite a 36-point loss to No. 23 Iowa in the semi-finals, a top 25 team, and despite a 36-point loss to No. 23 Iowa in the semi-finals, a top 25 team, the Miners proved to be a competitive team in the third round, defeating the Tennessee Volunteers 78-70—a team that was considered a top 25 team in the tournament.

**9. Recreational Sports**
**SOCCER**

Despite the lack of an official men’s soccer team at UTEP, the men’s soccer club conquered the regional championship to earn a spot at the 2013 NSCAA (National Intercollegiate Recreational Sports Association) National Championships. The regional tournament took place in Socorro, N.M., and was hosted by New Mexico Tech. UTEP defeated the Arizona Wildcats on penalties after a 1-1 draw. In the final match, UTEP played Arizona State, and after being down 2-1 at the half, the Miners completed the comeback with goals by Nasser Abraham and Julio Rodarte in the 70th and 85th minutes to win the regional title for the first time since 2005. At the tournament, the Miners fell to Florida, 3-1, and tied Illinois, 0-0. However, the tournament was cancelled due to bad weather before UTEP could play Northeastern in the consolation round.

**10. Men’s Basketball**
**LOST PLAYERS**

While head coach Tim Floyd was putting together one great class of recruits, in July his plans started to fall apart. After losing forwards Treymond Howard and Malcolm Moore, who transferred for lack of play, the Miners would suffer another three blows in a matter of three days. On July 17, Andre Spight was ruled ineligible by the NCAA, forcing him to enroll at a junior college before coming back to UTEP. On July 25, forward Chris Washburn Jr. (younger brother of junior guard/forward Julian Washburn) announced through social media that he was leaving UTEP to transfer to Texas Christian University, and later that night the El Paso Times reported that five-star recruit and McDonald’s All-American Isaac Hamilton asked UTEP to be released from his letter of intent. UTEP declined his request and later Hamilton lost his appeal to the NCAA National Letter of Intent Committee and decided to enroll at UCLA, where he has to sit out for one year.

**11. Football**
**UPSETS**

On Aug. 31, the Miners defeated the New Mexico Lobos 28-27 in overtime to pull off a major upset, but lost 67-63 and were close to pulling off a major upset, but lost 67-63 and finished the tournament with a 1-2 record against three of the best teams in the country.
FOOTBALL

Seniors ready to continue life after football

BY JAVIER CORTÉZ

When you walk around campus and see the towering athletes in sweats you might forget that they’re also students.

The football team has more student-athletes than any other sport at UTEP and most of the seniors on this year’s football team will be suiting up in something other than football once they graduate.

For the seniors, finishing at the bottom of their division wasn’t the plan, but they’re leaving having made a long-lasting impression on the rest of the team.

“When you play football, you create a bond with somebody,” said junior wide receiver Jordan Leslie. “It hurts to see them leave. Everyone on the offense, and even players on defense like Horace (Miller), (Marcus) Bagley, (Germard) Reed, you create a great bond with them—become great friends.”

The now starting quarterback for the Miners, freshman Mack Letchworth, said that he has learned a lot from them.

“I have respect for most of the seniors,” Letchworth said. “I’m friends with a lot of them and I hang out with a lot of them.”

Whereas the majority of the seniors will go on to other ventures in life, linebacker Horace Miller sees a future in football for himself, as he is set to graduate in December with a bachelor’s degree in multidisciplinary studies.

“At the end of the day, though my plan is to talk to (head coach) Scott (Kugler), coach (Andre) Patterson and pursue football,” Miller said. “They’ve been up-front and honest with me and those are the coaches that I take the most of what they say. They believe I have a bright future and I believe I have a bright future.”

When asked where he could see him in five years, Miller wasn’t hesitant.

“In five years, I’ll still be playing football in the NFL,” Miller said. “Definitely, I plan on having a great career. At the end of the day, I just want to be successful no matter what it is."

“I think it was the last home game (against FIU–Senior Night a couple weeks ago—it was a great feeling to win our last home game),” Ropati said. “It’s one of the most memorable moments in my UTEP career.”

However, Miller feels that the best game he was part of for the Miners was the game against the then fourth-ranked Oklahoma Sooners in the 2012 opener, in which the Miners fell 24-7.

“I would say the energy that we brought defensively against Oklahoma—the energy and intensity was outstanding,” Miller said. “In meetings before that game, we heard they (Oklahoma) were talking about how they would beat us 66-3 or 60-10 and we just took that and ran with it. That game was just phenomenal, I have never seen anything like that.”

Win or lose, the senior class has made a long-lasting impression on their fans, coaches, teammates, family and the university as a whole. While only a handful of the seniors reflected on their favorite memories wearing the orange and blue.

“I have respect for most of the seniors,” Letchworth said. “I’m friends with a lot of them and I hang out with a lot of them–become great friends.”

“Great bond with them–be great friends.”

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According to Kugler, Miller is one of the players that he plans to sign to the NFL, but knows he will have to work for it.

“The future is never guaranteed to you,” Kugler said. “Horace will get to work for it."

Already graduated with a degree in multidisciplinary studies, Craig Wenrick will also graduate in the summer with a second degree in criminal justice.

Prior to that, Wenrick has had multiple selections to the Conference USA Commissioners Honor Roll. He said that he doesn’t know what the future holds for him.

Linebacker A.J. Ropati is set to graduate in May with a degree in multidisciplinary studies, is looking to head back home as he finishes his career at UTEP.

“I’ll probably be living in my hometown in Carson, California,” Ropati said. “Or in Las Vegas going through the fire department academy or police academy. We’ll see what happens.”

As the Miners look back to their final game of the season against Middle Tennessee State last on Nov. 30, a few of the seniors reflected on their favorite memories wearing the orange and blue.

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And most importantly:

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And do more.

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And most importantly:

Thank you for being there

Thank you for your support.

Seniors may be reached at prospector@miners.utep.edu

"It hurts to see them leave...you create a great bond with them—become great friends."

—Jordan Leslie, junior wide receiver

"The future is never guaranteed to you," Kugler said. "Horace will get to work for it."
Senior middle blocker Xitlali Herrera has concluded her collegiate career in the U.S., after three years of playing for the Miners. While at UTEP, Herrera was a member of the Mexico's national team and she also earned All-Conference USA in 2011, 2012 and 2013.

Q: At what age did you start playing volleyball and how did you get started?
A: I started playing when I was 7 years old. I started because my mom, my older brother, my uncle and aunt played, so it's like the family sport. I just started going to my brother's practices and I used to play with my mom by the sideline. That's all I do and I love it.

Q: What have you learned from volleyball that you can apply to your everyday life?
A: Teamwork—it's one of the most important things I've learned from volleyball and also being disciplined.

Q: How did it feel to hear the cheers from fans, who not only came from El Paso but also those who crossed the border to see you play?
A: It was really nice and it felt great seeing all the people that came to watch me play and support me and the team.

Q: Who do you owe your success to, being both a student-athlete and a college graduate?
A: To my family, definitely—they've been there since day one and they've never stopped supporting me in every decision I've made.

Q: What are your overall thoughts on this season and what are you most thankful for?
A: We got a new coach (Holly Watts) and it was the first season for some of my teammates, so it was interesting playing with new people and being coached by a new coach. I'm very thankful for my teammates and the relationship I have with every single one of them.

Q: What was the reason that convinced you to come to UTEP?
A: Definitely the closeness to home. I wanted friends and family to come see me play.

Q: How much have you changed as a person after these three years as a Miner?
A: I think I'm a more mature person. I'm more responsible for the decisions I make.

Q: What is your single greatest memory as a student and as a player at UTEP?
A: It was really nice and it felt great to finish this season and even though it didn't end the way we wanted, I think the changes are for the good,” said senior middle blocker Xitlali Herrera. The Miners rubbed elbows with some of the best teams in the country as they faced San Diego, Hawaii and the defending national champions the Texas Longhorns to start their season.

Watts said that the support has helped the team this season from beginning to end.

“The crowd was always on our side and very supportive,” Watts said. “It felt like we improved as the season went along, as a whole. Our chemistry continued to improve even through our last weekend in Northern California.”

The Miners were 9-4 at home and posted a 3-2 record in neutral sites. The Miners showed grit when performing against some of the best teams Conference USA has to offer, they were close to upset the No. 5 team in the conference, the Tulsa Golden Hurricane, losing in five sets.

What a rewarding experience and a great team to fight through the challenges. What an incredible home atmosphere we have in Memorial Gym,” Watts said about her first season at UTEP. “We didn't accomplish all we wanted to as a program yet, but the fight and determination of this team was a pleasure to work with.”

With the offseason comes the departure of the seniors on the squad. The Miners will lose five players before next season begins. Watts said she is always recruiting and has players already on their way to UTEP.

“We have three athletic young ladies on their way into our program so far,” Watts said. “We are planning to increase our athleticism, as well as our overall ball control and termination ability. We are always recruiting.”

One of the players coach Watts will have to replace is Herrera. She jumped and spiked for 415 kills this season—a team high. She spoke about her experience under coach Watts.

“I’ve learned to stay focused for three months on the same goal. I think she’s going to make this program grow. She knows what it takes to go from good to great,” Herrera said. Now coach Watts gets to have an entire offseason to get her team in the correct mindset, along with getting her squad to the highest athletic standard as possible.

“We are going to work on quickness, speed and strength. These things will help us to prepare for the fall season, athletically,” Watts said.

“Our court, we are going to work to improve our overall ball control and power.”

Watts also said that with the effort the team puts in every day, the program will grow without a doubt.

“If the team will continue to put forth the effort to get better, together, every day, this team and this program will get better. We have the resources needed to accomplish greatness,” Watts said.

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put to the test against Belmont and Georgia Tech. They then will travel to College Station to face the 2011 national champions, Texas A&M, on Jan. 2 and then they start their Conference USA schedule.

There is no denying that the Miners’ early accomplishments are great as they are off to their third-best start in school history, but associate head coach Ewa Laskowska is adamantly about the team taking it one game at a time.

“We’re just trying to focus on one game at a time and one play at a time,” Laskowska said. “We’re just trying to focus as a team and improve on everything we do. We don’t talk about long-term goals, like I said, one practice at a time, one game at a time.”

Even though the Miners have played great team basketball, Thornton has been on the forefront of the team’s success, leading them in almost every major statistical category.

“There is no question that she is important to the team,” Laskowska said. “She’s a senior. She’s played a lot for us and she’s big on our team. She gets us going when she gets rebounds and puts on defensive pressure. All of our three seniors have a lot of experience playing and they’re a very important part of the team—jumpstarting us and everyone else follows.”

The margin of victory might be getting bigger and bigger for the Miners, but understanding that the season is still young and staying humble is what the Miners are about.

“It’s still early. I think we just got to stay focused and do the little things. If we keep doing those things, we’ll be successful later on in the season. The game against Northern Colorado was a wakeup call for us,” Thornton said.

FOOTBALL

By, he lost out on the job to a guy who starts for the Miami Dolphins and a Heisman trophy winner. It might be a while before Kugler finds another quarterback as well-equipped as Showers. Kugler has one more year with Showers that hope fully won’t go to waste like this year.

The Ugly.

On defense, the Miners are losing five starters. Now you might think losing some players who play on a defense that ranks at the bottom of almost every major defensive category in college football might not be a bad thing. Well it might not be bad, but it’s definitely not good. The chance that the Miners’ defense will make a vast improvement next year is very unlikely.

Conferences changes are irrelevant. With the revamping of Conference USA this season, or more honestly put, the destruction of Conference USA, it’s well known that they took a step back in terms of talent that was supposed to be a good thing for the Miners. What this season has shown is that the Miners have the situation very easily—their level of play dropped just as their conference did.

At the end of the day, the result of the game against Middle Tennessee State is irrelevant, as the Miners’ season has been over for quite some time now and the worst thing would be that it might carry over into next year. There hasn’t been a lot of good, but plenty of bad and ugly.

SOFTBALL

Softball signs new players for 2015 season

COURTNEY CLAYTON / MIDDLE INFIELDER / GLENCOE HS / CORNELIUS, ORE.

Played three seasons of varsity softball and garnered multiple accolades highlighted by the 2013 Oregon 6A Player of the Year and named 2013 first-team All-State infielder. She led a 29-2 Crimson Tide team in hits (56), RBI (40) and batting average (.523), also added three home runs, 34 runs scored and 17 doubles.

Head coach Echo-Hawk on Clayton:

“Courtney is one of the most consistent players I have seen both offensively and defensively. She brings a complete energy that will be an asset to our team.”

BREANNA MEDINA / OUTFIELD / FAITH CHRISTIAN ACADEMY / EL PASO, TX.

Played club softball with the Texas Sluggers and the New Mexico Sol. All-around athlete who excelled in volleyball and basketball as FCA does not field a softball team. Won 2009 Western National Championship with the Sluggers and 2011 ONC Triple Crown Championship with the Sol.

Echo-Hawk on Medina:

“Breanna is a very talented dynamic player and will be extremely exciting to watch as she develops.”

LINDA GARCIA / CATCGER / KAISER HS / FONTANA, CALIF.

Played three seasons of varsity softball and established career highs during junior season in batting average (.346), RBI (29), home runs (5) and on-base percentage (.454). Garcia was named to 2013 first-team All-League … went 2-for-5, with two RBIs and a run scored during an 11-4 win over Mira Costa in the second-round of the 2013 CIF Southern Section Softball Championships —Division III.

Echo-Hawk on Garcia:

“Linda is solid behind the plate and one of the hardest workers. Her knowledge of the game will benefit us behind the plate.”

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BRIEF

Football

BRIEF from page B11

not only about the Miners’ early accomplishments, but understanding that the season is still young and staying humble is what the Miners are about.

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Vitola coming back for more

BY EDWIN DELGADO
The Prospector

Senior center Kristine Vitola decided to return for another season with UTEP after suffering a season-ending ACL injury last season against Arizona State.

Vitola graduated in May with a business management degree and could have simply just moved on and gone back home to continue her career, but she wanted to finish her collegiate career on the court and give it her all.

"She could have gone to play pro, she has had a serious boyfriend for sometime too–there were a lot of reasons for her to go back home," said head coach Keitha Adams. "She didn't want her career to end on that note here. It says a lot about her to decide to come back to be part of our program for another year, so I'm pleased and honored to be her coach for another year."

Vitola said that coming back for another year was primarily for all the support and appreciation for what UTEP and El Paso have given to her and that's what made her come back.

"When I came here, I didn't know anybody and they welcomed me with open arms," Vitola said. "El Paso is like my second family. I love everything about it and it has really been great. The fans that have come to the games to support us have just been phenomenal."

Unlike many athletes, it took her a long time to get into basketball. It wasn't until Vitola was 13 years old that she began playing basketball with one of her cousins, where her height helped her to develop her skills more rapidly.

At 6 feet 4 inches, Vitola made basketball her passion and she quickly became one of the best prospects in Riga, Latvia. She played for several youth national teams for Latvia, including the under-20 2008 European Championship.

In her career as a Miner, Vitola said that the 2011 Conference USA championship and had the opportunity to play in the NCAA Tournament, which has been her best experiences as part of the UTEP squad.

So far this season through six games, Vitola has averaged eight points per game, 5.5 rebounds and has a total of 18 blocks.

"She is a very smart player, she's got a great basketball IQ. She sees the game very well and she has played a lot for us," Adams said. "She understands what we are trying to do—we are in sync with one another most of the time. She can shoot the ball, she can rebound and a pretty good decision maker."

Once it is all said and done, Vitola is hoping to go back home and sign with a professional team to fulfill her dream of playing overseas. She said she is also prepared for what she plans to do after basketball.

"Later on, I'm hoping to open up my own business. I want to open a child care center. That is my plan for the future," Vitola said. "At least I want to be doing something related to business or accounting."

Adams said that Vitola is gaining confidence as the games have gone by and they both feel that she and the team can still get a lot better.

"So far it's been great. I'm still far from where I think I can be, but I come in and do my best every day. That's the goal for me, to get more comfortable and get back and get better," Vitola said. "I'm taking it one game at a time. Of course we want to go as far as we can, but we have to take it day by day and don't take anything for granted."

Kristine Vitola suffered an ACL injury last year and came back to play one more season.